

AMD17-130 4/15/08

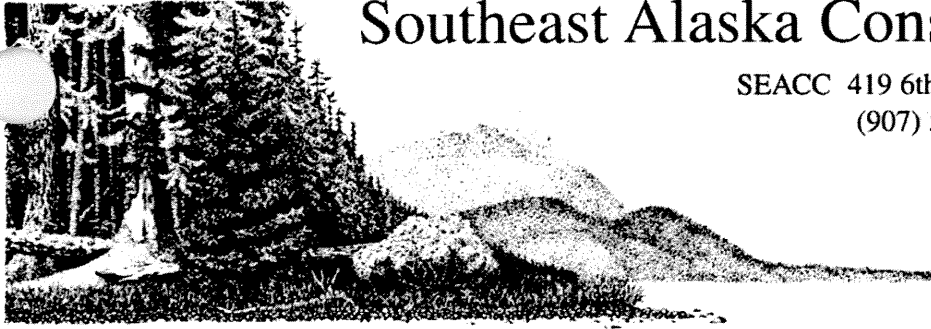
**Bell, Leanne S (DOT)**

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**From:** seacc@gci.net on behalf of Sue Schrader [Sue@seacc.org]  
**Date:** Monday, April 14, 2008 4:25 PM  
**To:** DOT STIP  
**Subject:** Comments on STIP Amendment #17  
**Attachments:** SEACC Comments on STIP Amd #17 w attach 4\_14\_08.doc.pdf

SEACC's comments on the STIP Amendment #17 are attached.

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[www.seacc.org](http://www.seacc.org)



# Southeast Alaska Conservation Council

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April 14, 2008

Via email to: [dot.stip@alaska.gov](mailto:dot.stip@alaska.gov)

Division of Program Development  
ADOT, Southeast Region  
Box 11250  
Juneau, AK 99801-7999

Please accept the following comments on the Statewide Transportation Improvements Plan (STIP) Amendment #17, submitted by Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC). SEACC is a coalition of fifteen volunteer citizen conservation groups in twelve communities across Southeast Alaska, dedicated to safeguarding the integrity of Southeast Alaska's unsurpassed natural environment while providing for the sustainable use of our region's resources.

Our primary concern is that the Juneau Access Project should be removed from the STIP because the project does not comply with state and federal requirements. The 2005 federal transportation bill, SAFETEA-LU, requires that state departments of transportation demonstrate that full funding will be available for projects included in their STIP. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) fails to comply with this mandate. ADOT has consistently failed to provide realistic cost estimates for the 50 mile road, ferry terminal, and ferry associated with the project. The State can not demonstrate that the necessary funding is available until it completes an accurate cost estimate.

With accurate estimates, we believe the Juneau Access Project would cost over \$500 million, triggering the "Major Project" status and requirements for a Project Management and Financial Management Plans. It is irresponsible for the State to move forward with a project of this magnitude without these plans in place.

Even at the current \$374 million price tag, ADOT cannot reasonably anticipate full funding of the project. Currently, ADOT has identified \$105.6 million dollars in state and federal funding, roughly a quarter of the total figure. Federal transportation funding will continue to decline, and state funding for transportation has had an erratic history. A March 10, 2008 letter signed by six legislators requested that state general funds be moved from the Juneau Access Project to the Marine Highway System. This letter demonstrates the lack of statewide support and fiscal certainty for the project.

ALASKA SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FOREST DWELLERS, Point Baker • CHICHAGOF CONSERVATION COUNCIL, Tenakee •  
CUSTOMARY & TRADITIONAL GATHERING COUNCIL OF KAKE • FRIENDS OF BERNERS BAY, Juneau • FRIENDS OF GLACIER BAY, Gustavus •  
JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY • LOWER CHATHAM CONSERVATION SOCIETY, Port Alexander • LYNN CANAL CONSERVATION, Haines •  
NARROWS CONSERVATION COALITION, Petersburg • LISIANSKI INLET RESOURCE COUNCIL, Pelican • PRINCE OF WALES CONSERVATION LEAGUE, Craig •  
SITKA CONSERVATION SOCIETY • TAKU CONSERVATION SOCIETY, Juneau • WRANGELL RESOURCE COUNCIL  
•YAKUTAT RESOURCE CONSERVATION COUNCIL

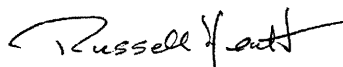
printed on recycled paper 

The Juneau Access Project also fails to meet the policy objectives outlined in the State-wide Long-Range Transportation Policy Plan: *Let's Get Moving 2030*. Specifically, spending on the road detracts from the State's ability to "preserve the existing transportation system." Rather than meeting the objective of "increasing safety", the proposed road with 36 avalanche chutes and multiple rock slide areas will create new dangers for travelers. The proposed 50 mile road and ferry terminal at the Katzechin River Delta will also detract from the State's natural beauty and the integrity of our ecosystems.

The Alaska Marine Highway System has long been the critical link connecting not only Southeast Alaska's communities but the entire State. In fact, a recent statewide survey found the 85% of all Alaskans support full funding of the Marine Highway System. See attachment. According to the *Let's Get Moving 2030*, \$26 million should be spent on vessel replacement annually while \$23 million should be spent on vessel refurbishment. Unfortunately, STIP amendment #17 proposes less than a quarter million dollars for replacement ferries each year for the next two years. The \$20 million the ADOT plans to spend refurbishing existing ferries is a more reasonable amount. We would, however, like to see an overall increase in the investment that the State plans to make in the Marine Highway System.

Lynn Canal Conservation (LCC), a SEACC member group based in Haines, has provided extensive evidence in their comments on the STIP Amendment #17 to demonstrate that: 1) construction costs are vastly underestimated, 2) if fairly estimated, the Juneau Access Project would require Project and Financial Management Plans, 3) full funding cannot be reasonably anticipated, and 4) the project does not meet statewide long-range policy objectives. We endorse the comments provided by LCC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell Heath".

Russell Heath, Executive Director

Cc: Governor Sarah Palin

hays **research** group

08-125

# Statewide Opinion Counts Survey

## ATPP

Survey Fielded March 10-12, 2008


n=401, m.o.e. +/-4.86%, 95% Confidence Interval

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## **Survey Methodology**

### **Methodology**

This survey was fielded March 10 -12, 2008 as part of the Hays Research Group Statewide Opinion Counts Survey. 401 completed respondents were interviewed. The margin of error for the data collected is +/- 4.86 % for a 401 response survey for the data analyzed in its entirety with a 95% confidence level; meaning that we can be 95% sure that if every resident of the State with working telephone numbers who have at least one member who has voted in at least two of the last four local or state elections was actually surveyed, the results would vary by no more than 4.86% in either direction.



The survey sample used was a computer generated random list derived from a database of all households within the State of Alaska with working telephone numbers who have at least one member who has voted in at least two of the last four local or state elections. The sample frame was designed to accurately reflect the actual population percentages.

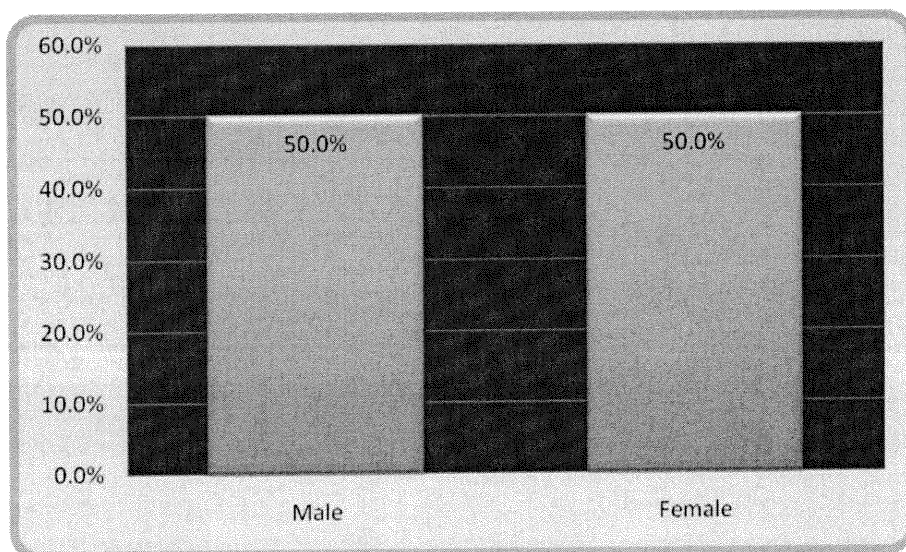
Respondents were screened to confirm they were over 18 and each household was attempted at least four times over a period of several days to account for non-response bias. Data was analyzed utilizing SPSS Quancept Software. Interviews were conducted by trained staff with on-site supervision utilizing state of the art computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). Random interviews were monitored to assure quality control measures were followed. Dialing results were analyzed daily to assure statistically accurate distribution of call disposition in order to account for "non-response" variables.

**Question 1**

Answered by 401 out of 401

Gender by observation

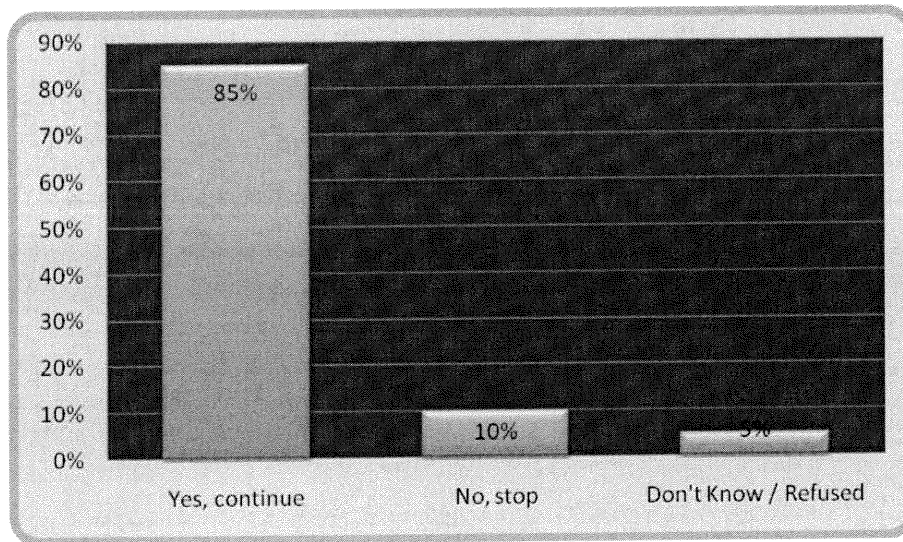
|           |         |     |
|-----------|---------|-----|
| 1. Male   | 200/401 | 50% |
| 2. Female | 201/401 | 50% |



**Question 2**

The state's ferry system requires approximately \$70 million per year from the state to balance revenues and operating costs, plus needed upgrades will cost approximately \$60 million each year through 2030. The state plans to spend around \$1.05 billion each year through 2030 on roads, or eight times as much annually as it will spend on ferries. Do you think the state should continue providing ferry service to 30 communities in Southeast, Southwest, and Southcentral Alaska?

|                      |         |     |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| Yes, continue        | 340/401 | 85% |
| No, stop             | 40/401  | 10% |
| Don't Know / Refused | 21/401  | 5%  |

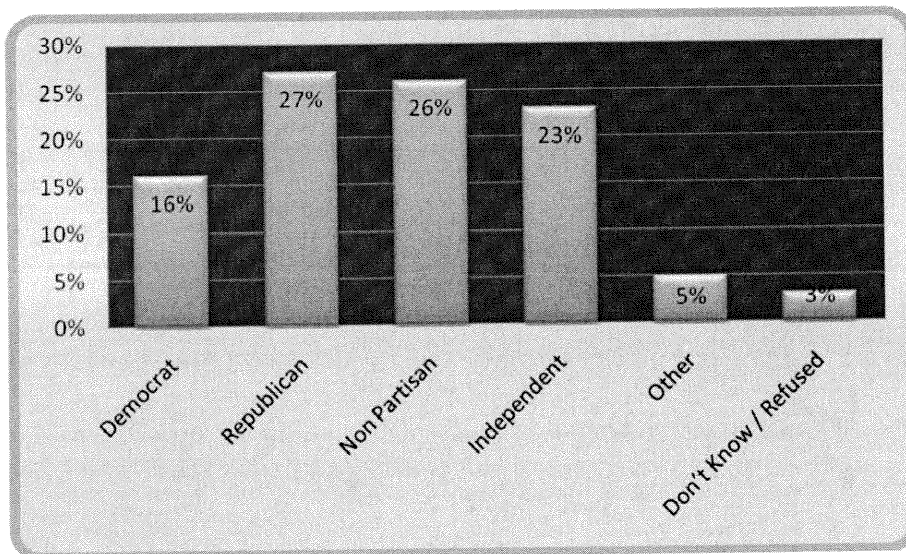


### Question 3

Answered by 401 out of 401

For statistical purposes only, can you please tell me if you are registered as Republican, Democrat, Non-Partisan, Independent or Other?

|                      |         |     |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| Democrat             | 63/401  | 16% |
| Republican           | 108/401 | 27% |
| Non Partisan         | 106/401 | 26% |
| Independent          | 92/401  | 23% |
| Other                | 19/401  | 5%  |
| Don't Know / Refused | 13/401  | 3%  |





Q2. The state's ferry system requires approximately \$70 million per year from the state to balance revenues and operating costs, plus needed upgrades will cost approximately \$60 million each year through 2030. The state plans to spend around \$1.05 billion each year through 2030 on roads, or eight times as much annually as it will spend on ferries. Do you think the state should continue providing ferry service to 30 communities in Southeast, Southwest, and Southcentral Alaska?

|                        | Gender |      |        | Region |     |     |     |     |     | Party |     |     |     |     |     |        |  |
|------------------------|--------|------|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|--|
|                        | Total  | Male | Female | Mat-Su | SE  | SC  | Int | Rur | Fbx | Anc   | Dem | Rep | NP  | Ind | Oth | DK/Ref |  |
| Base                   | 401    | 200  | 201    | 68     | 61  | 38  | 46  | 17  | 6   | 165   | 63  | 108 | 106 | 92  | 19  | 13     |  |
| Yes, continue          | 340    | 168  | 172    | 55     | 58  | 34  | 39  | 14  | 4   | 136   | 51  | 91  | 92  | 77  | 17  | 12     |  |
|                        | 85%    | 84%  | 86%    | 81%    | 95% | 89% | 85% | 82% | 67% | 82%   | 81% | 84% | 87% | 84% | 89% | 92%    |  |
| No, stop               | 40     | 27   | 13     | 8      | 2   | 3   | 4   | 2   | 1   | 20    | 7   | 10  | 10  | 11  | 1   | 1      |  |
|                        | 10%    | 14%  | 6%     | 12%    | 3%  | 8%  | 9%  | 12% | 17% | 12%   | 11% | 9%  | 9%  | 12% | 5%  | 8%     |  |
| Don't Know/<br>Refused | 21     | 5    | 16     | 5      | 1   | 1   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 9     | 5   | 7   | 4   | 4   | 1   | -      |  |
|                        | 5%     | 3%   | 8%     | 7%     | 2%  | 3%  | 7%  | 6%  | 17% | 5%    | 8%  | 6%  | 4%  | 4%  | 5%  | -      |  |